

AHOOJA COMMITTEE REPORT

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A Brief

In the aftermath of the carnage, one of the issues that the Opposition parties disputed with the Rajiv Gandhi Government was the exact death toll. Barely a month after the carnage, Atal Behari Vajpayee released a survey conducted by the BJP of the killed persons. Its estimate was about 2,700, a figure worth recalling because it is very close to the official death toll finally determined by the Government almost three years later.

A committee headed by the then home secretary of Delhi Administration, R.K. Ahooja, conducted a detailed survey drawing on diverse sources like the FIRs, compensation claims and the list provided by the Citizens Justice Committee (CJC). The Ahooja committee also put notices in newspapers inviting the public to give information about deaths in Delhi during the 1984 carnage. The figure the Ahooja committee arrived at in August 1987 after this elaborate (though belated) exercise is 2,733.

Earlier, the Government bandied much smaller figures. A month after the carnage, home minister P.V. Narasimha Rao told a parliamentary committee that about 800 people were killed during the carnage. But in the course of the Misra Commission's proceedings, the Government increased its estimate of the deaths in Delhi to 2,307. This was in response to the CJC's much higher estimate: 3,949.

The Misra Commission therefore suggested the appointment of a committee to settle the issue. Misra also observed that the correct death toll would be somewhere between the Government's estimate of 2,307 and the CJC's estimate of 3,949. In the event, the Ahooja committee concluded that the number of people killed in the 1984 carnage in Delhi alone is 2,733.

Introduction

The Administrator, Delhi vide his order No. F. /PS/HS/87/1226-1237 to 1243 dated 23rd February, 1987 appointed a one man Committee consisting of Home Secretary, Delhi Administration with the following terms and conditions:

“Where a number of deaths occurred and a number of grave offence were committed in various incidents of rioting following the assassination of the late Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi on 31-10-1984;

And whereas it is necessary to determine the exact number, names and other particulars of persons who were killed during these riots with a view to grant ex-gratia payments and / or other benefits to the next of kin.

Now, therefore, the Administrator of Delhi is pleased to direct that the Home Secretary, Delhi Administration will determine, after calling for claims within a specified period, the final figures of death and the names and other particulars of persons who were killed with in the Union Territory of Delhi during the period of riot from 31-10-84 to 7-11-84, and also will make suitable recommendations regarding ex-gratia payments and / or other benefits to the next of kin.

The Administrator is also pleased to direct that the Home Secretary, Delhi Administration will submit his report within three months from the date of issue of this order.”

The above orders of the Administrator were made as a direct sequel to the report of the Justice Ranganath Misra Commission of Inquiry which was set up to enquire into the allegations in regard to the incidents of organized violence which took place in Delhi following the assassination of the late Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi.

The Commission in its report had examined the question of the number of deaths which occurred in the riots in Delhi, in the context of the submissions and affidavits made before it by the Citizens Justice Committee (CJC) and the Delhi Administration and had come to the conclusion that for various reasons it was not easy to ascertain the definite number of people who had died. The Commission had observed that the list supplied by the CJC contained 3949 names. After correcting it for duplication and additions and arithmetical (sic) errors, the total number in this list came to 3874. On the other hand, the Delhi Administration had filed a statement before the Commission admitting the number of deaths during the riots to be 2307. The Commission then went on to observe as follows: -

“The number had, however, to be somewhere between 3870 (arithmetically corrected to be 3874) and 2307 the higher figure coming from the Committee and the lower figure having been admitted by the Delhi Administration. Placed in this situation, the Commission has not endeavoured to ascertain the exact number of people who died during the riots. Simultaneously, it is a fact that

the matter cannot be taken as concluded until the exact number is ascertained by a further inquiry. Death gives rise to definite consequences and brings in certain considerations. As already found the next of kin become entitled to a compensation of Rs.20,000/- the recommendations of the Commission may bring about certain other benefits and if there be a widow or dependent relations left behind, she is or they are entitled to certain advantages. It is quite likely that in some cases the next of kin may not have come forward to raise a claim on the basis of death. The manner in which the Delhi Administration has been changing the figure by conceding the claims leads the Commission to accept the position that if there be a further probe and of a close type, it is quite likely that the number may increase

Keeping these aspects in view the Commission recommends that instead of accepting a definite number as a final list, the matter should be kept open for further examination where the number shall not go below 2307 and may not go beyond 3874. But in between the exact number should be ascertained. The modality for ascertaining his should be by the appointment of an officer with full powers to go into the matter and he should give public notice to invite claims of death within the Union Territory of Delhi during the period of riots (October 31 to November 7, 1984) by fixing a time for raising of claims and also a date for finalizing the same in accordance with a procedure behaving the rules of natural justice and figures should be determined. As and when any new name is added to the already accepted list of 2307 by the Delhi Administration, the benefits contemplated in respect of the dead people should be extended to the next of kin. Since delay might make the inquiry not beneficial and modality proposed in the recommendation may be implemented without delay and a time frame should be prescribed.”

It is on the basis of the above recommendations of the Commission, which were accepted by the Government of India, that the task of ascertaining the correct numbers was assigned to the Home Secretary of the Delhi Administration.

First Information Report

Till June, 1986 a total number of 403 FIRs were lodged with the Delhi Police on the basis of incidents occurred during the period 31st October, 1984 to 7th November, 1984. The Delhi Police registered 55 cases of murder, 5 cases of murder / looting, 70 cases of murder / arson and 16 cases of murder with arson. The final figure of deaths given by the Police on the basis of FIRs came to 1419.

The number of deaths as per the FIRs with the police cannot be taken as a reliable indicator of the total number of deaths during the riots. This is because, in many cases FIRs were not lodged either because the affected families had left Delhi or were reluctant to go to the police, or even if they did so, it is not certain that all the statements made by them were properly recorded. The Ranganath Misra Commission has also observed that, "such a tense panic situation prevailed that it became difficult for the families to lodge FIR." In the words of the Commission: -

"It is a fact and the Commission on the basis of satisfaction records a finding that first information reports were not received if they implicated police or any person in authority and the informants were required to delete such allegations from written reports. When oral reports were recorded they were not taken down verbatim and brief statements dropping out allegations against police or other officials and men in position were written. Several instances have come to the notice of the Commission on where a combined FIR has been recorded in regard to several separate incidents."

The Commission went on to observe that:

"During the period of riots what was of primary importance for the victims was to run away from the scene and conceal from notice of the rioters so as to escape certain death. In several instances those who had not been massacred were picked up either by police or Army personnel or through other agencies or by their own efforts and shifted to Relief Camps where they were maintained for some time. Semi-normal conditions returned in different localities within 3-4 days but confidence took time to get restored and, therefore, until the victims returned to their localities quite sometime after, in most of the cases they did not know what exactly had happened, so as to make a full report, nor did they know as to who exactly had died or get assaulted."

For the reasons, which have been graphically brought out by the Commission, no reliance can be placed on the figures of the deaths culled out from FIRs lodged with the police during or soon after the riots.

Enquiries Conducted By Delhi Administration

In order to provide relief to the families of those who were affected by the riots, the Delhi Administration had appointed a Relief Commissioner. Amongst other relief measures the Administration had also announced that the next of kin of those who were killed would be given an ex-gratia payment of Rs.10,000/- in each case. In order to disburse the relief, a set procedure was adopted. This consisted of a public notice for calling the applications. Thereafter, teams were set up, consisting of officials of Delhi Administration, to conduct enquiries into individual cases. The Relief Commissioner first published public notices in various newspapers on 6-11-84 and repeated it at intervals. In response to the public notices, the Relief Commissioner received the following number of applications up to 31st May, 1987: -

<u>Name of District</u>	<u>No. of Deaths</u>
EAST	1654
WEST	960
NORTH / CENTRAL	306
NEW DELHI / SOUTH	423
TOTAL	3414

After the enquiries conducted by the Relief Commissioner, 2426 cases were accepted till 31st May, 1987 while the rest were rejected.

On the basis of the enquiries conducted by his office, the Relief Commissioner has sanctioned payment of death compensation in 2426 cases up to date (31st May, 1987). Thus, according to the enquiries conducted by the Relief Commissioner's office a total number of 2426 deaths have been established so far.

A detailed scrutiny of the list of the Relief Commissioner office has shown that names of 21 persons appear twice. Thus, in calculating the number of deaths the list of 2426 will have to be reduced by 21. Further police verification has shown that two persons mentioned in that list are still alive while two persons had died before the riots in November, 1984.

After taking out these four cases the number of deaths, which can be accepted on the basis of the enquiries conducted by the Relief Commissioner would come to 2401. This list would be referred hereafter as the 'Relief Commissioner's list.'

List Prepared By Citizen Justice Committee

The Ranganath Misra Commission had forwarded to the Delhi Administration a list of persons killed as given by the CJC. This list contained a total of 3870 cases.

On receipt of this list, a special effort was made through the Delhi Police to verify the cases of death mentioned therein. The investigating teams were handicapped by various factors including the non-availability of family members who had moved away from the address given in the list.

It was also found that neighbours and other witnesses could not furnish authentic information about the identity of the victims. Many of the deceased were killed away from the residence and places of work, which rendered the verification difficult. In many cases, the visitors to the city who had come alone were also killed and it was not possible to identify the bodies.

The verification of the list also showed that in many cases the particulars given were not complete. Thus in the list pertaining to police station Delhi Cantt. A total number of 368 cases had been shown, out of which names of only 320 persons had been given.

Similarly, the list of 131 persons in police station Mangolpuri, names of four persons had not been given, while in the list of police station Sultanpuri, out of 385 persons the names of 21 persons were not given.

In spite of these handicaps the investigating teams were also to identify, on the basis of field and spot enquiries, a total of 1939 cases. It was also found that out of these 1939 cases, 1659 names already figured in the Relief Commissioner's list.

This left a total of 280 names, which did not figure in the list of cases verified by the Relief Commissioner. For purpose of this enquiry the above list of 1939 cases including the 280 names will be referred to henceforth as the 'police list.'

Enquiry Conducted By This Committee

In accordance with the recommendations of Justice Ranganath Misra Commission and the terms of reference of this Committee, it was decided to issue a public notice calling for information in the following format:

1. Name of father / husband of applicant.
2. Age of applicant.
3. Full name (and address) of person(s) killed.
4. Date of death.
5. Place of death.
6. Relationship of the deceased with the applicant.
7. Whether relief was sought earlier and was granted / not granted.
8. If granted, name and full address of the legal heir / next of kin to whom the amount (name and address) of relief fund.
9. FIR (original).
10. Death Certificate (original).
11. Photocopy of ration card.
12. Photocopy of such documents, etc., which could reasonably prove that person(s) was (were) killed during train / bus journey within the Union Territory of Delhi with photocopy of such other documents as he / she may like to furnish.

The public notice was published in English, Hindi, Urdu and Punjabi beginning on 18-3-84* (inviting applications with the above particulars).

* Notices were published in different newspapers on different dates.

In the following newspapers: -

1. Tribune (English daily), Chandigarh.
2. Punjab Kesari, Delhi and Jalandhar.
3. Hind Samachar (Urdu), Jalandhar.
4. Hindustan Times, New Delhi.
5. Times of India, New Delhi.
6. Indian Express, Delhi and Chandigarh.
7. Nav Bharat Times, New Delhi.
8. Hindustan (Hindi), New Delhi.
9. Jansatta (Hindi), New Delhi.
10. Pratap (Urdu), New Delhi.
11. Milap (Urdu), New Delhi.
12. Awam (Urdu), New Delhi.
13. Jathedar (Punjabi), New Delhi.
14. Panthak Samachar (Punjabi), New Delhi.
15. Educator (Punjabi), New Delhi.
16. Akali Patrika (Punjabi), Jalandhar.
17. Ajit (Punjabi). Jalandhar.

The last date fixed for receipt of the applications was 10th April, 1987. However, applications continued to be received till the end of April, 1987 both by post as well as by hand. All these applications have been taken into account.

For receiving applications, collecting and processing them, an Officer on Special Duty (OSD) was appointed in the Home Department with his office at Room No.19, Old Secretariat, Delhi. Application which came by hand were received personally by the OSD who also interviewed the applicants on the points on which the applicants were not able to give precise data in response to the notice.

The Committee received, in all, applications pertaining to 1767 cases of death.

The aforesaid 1767 cases were scrutinized and it was found that there were 62 duplicate cases i.e., two applications had been made for the same case of death. After eliminating these duplicate cases, a total of 1705 cases remained for verification. After scrutinizing the individual applications it was found that in 1585 cases it had been stated by the applicants that financial assistance had already been provided by the Relief Commissioner / D.C. Delhi.

In other words, these 1585 cases had already been verified and were included in the list of the Relief Commissioner. The remaining 162 cases, where it had been stated by the applicants that no compensation had been paid, were separated. A computer check was then conducted of these 162 names with the Delhi Police as well as the Relief Commissioner's list. This computer check revealed that there were 39 more cases, which were included already in the Relief Commissioner's list.

There were also another 11 cases, which had been verified earlier by the Delhi Police and included in the Police list though in these cases compensation had not been given by the Relief Commissioner. It was thus found that 112 cases remained which did not find any mention either in the Delhi Police list or in the list of the Relief Commissioner. Further scrutiny revealed that there were two more cases of duplication. The remaining 110 cases were then taken up for further verification.

The Committee issued individual letters to each of the 110 applicants to appear before it and to adduce further proof in support of their claims. Out of these 110 applicants a total of 28 appeared before the Committee for a personal hearing while another 6 sent additional information by post. The rest did not respond.

The above list of 110 names was also supplied to the Delhi Police with the direction that a further spot verification should be conducted. According to the verification carried out by the Delhi Police, deaths of 45 persons has been established. However, the death of 46 persons could not be verified due to various reasons. The police also reported that remaining 13 persons were

residence of Punjab, Haryana and such verification in their cases could not be made. Further three persons were found to be still alive.

The field inquiries conducted by the Delhi Police on the direction of this Committee as well as the personal hearings conducted by the Committee have established 52 cases of deaths as verified out of the total number of 110 cases taken up for inquiry. The Committee has passed appropriate orders in each of these cases and sent the related files to the Relief Commissioner for payment of ex-gratia relief.

Total Number Of Deaths

The information now available from various agencies can be summarized as follows: -

	<u>No. of Deaths</u>
Verified by the Relief Commissioner	2426
As per FIR lodged with the police	1419
Verified by the police out of the list supplied by the CJC	1939
Verified on basis of applications received by the Committee	52

In view of the detailed enquiries conducted already I accept 2401 cases out of those verified by the Relief Commissioner, 25 cases being rejected either because of duplication or late enquiries revealing the person to be alive. The list of these 2401 names with other relevant particulars is in Part-I of the enclosed list.

The Delhi Police have also verified 1939 cases out of the CJC list, out of which 1656 cases are common with the list of Relief Commissioner leaving a balance of 280 cases. In these cases of 280 compensation has not been paid as no one has come forward to claim it. As these 280 cases, given by the CJC have been verified by the spot enquiries. The list of their names is in Part-II. The two lists together bring the number of deaths to 2681.

As already pointed out 1705 cases have been submitted to this Committee. A computer check revealed that out of these, 1488 cases were found included in the list of Relief Commissioner or that of the Police, leaving a balance of 217 cases.

Out of these 217 cases, in 107 cases the applicants have stated that they have already received compensation from the Relief Commissioner. These cases should, therefore, have appeared in the Relief Commissioner's list. As the computer check did not come up with these names, a manual examination of the case files was also done. But this also could not establish a proper link up.

However, as the applicants themselves have admitted that they have received ex-gratia payment amounting to Rs.20,000/- from the Relief Commissioner, these 107 names could be concluded to be a part of the Relief Commissioner's list, the non-matching of the names arising out of clerical mistakes or the changed particulars given by the claimants or insufficient information given in the applications.

After omitting these 107 cases, only 110 cases remained for scrutiny by this Committee. As already stated the Committee has verified 52 cases out of this list to be genuine.

Thus the Committee comes to the conclusion that the total deaths during 1984 riots come to 2401 plus 280 plus 52 i.e. 2733.

The Committee is of the view that this is a reliable figure. The CJC had submitted a list containing 3870 names. Out of these, 1939 cases had been verified by the Delhi Police leaving 1731 cases.

In respect of these remaining cases, in some cases verification could not be done because particulars, i.e. names etc., were not given and only the number of deaths had been mentioned in a particular locality. However, now that this Committee has invited fresh applications based on public notices published in newspapers and also publicized through various press statements, the applications which came contained only 110 names in addition to those which had already been verified either by the Relief Commissioner or by the Delhi Police.

If there had been another 1731 cases or so apart from those verified by the Delhi Police out of the list submitted by the CJC, then the number of additional cases coming before the Committee should also have been correspondingly large. The fact that only a small number of 110 such additional cases came to notice would indicate that enquiries done by the Delhi Administration both through the Relief Commissioner as well as the Delhi Police were quite exhaustive and thorough and very few cases were indeed left out.

The figure of 2733 deaths now calculated by this Committee can, therefore, be taken as the authentic figure, though it is possible that there may be marginal changes in this number due to an odd case being brought to light here and there.

Grant Of Relief

Considering the unprecedented number of casualties and the extent of damage, the Delhi Administration with the approval of the Central Government, had appointed a Relief Commissioner with effect from 4-11-84 vide its order No.F.8/1/84-SI of 5th November 1984.

The Delhi Administration also detailed 100 senior officers for duty for making assessment of relief / rehabilitation assistance required. For this purpose Delhi was divided into four zones name West, East, Central, North / New Delhi.

Each zone was placed under the control of an ADM / Joint Secretary in the Delhi Administration wife publicity was also given through the medium of Radio and T.V. and Press for inviting claims.

The scale of relief was decide by the M.H.A. vide their letter No.13030/1/84 dated 6-11-84 as given below:-

Category Amount

DEATH Rs. 10,000 /-

INJURY Rs. 2000 /-

DAMAGE TO DWELLING UNITS:

TOTAL Rs. 10,000 /-

SUBSTANTIAL Rs. 5,000 /-

PARTIAL Rs. 5000 /-

The procedure adopted was as follows.

Claims were obtained in the prescribed form No. R-I and R-II from the victims' next of kin. The Sector Officers who were of gazetted ranks were then asked to verify the genuineness of the claim. These R-I and R-II forms were also distributed in the various relief camps, 12 of which were set up at that time. Sector Officers were made the sanctioning authority for the relief.

Since the conditions remained disturbed for some time and also in order to ensure early settlement of claims, most claims were decided on the basis of one or two local witnesses and sometime on the statement of the claimant alone.

This was done because of the fact that many of the victims could not either file a FIR or because the FIRs were allegedly not registered by the police. Therefore, initially, death certificates / FIRs were not considered essential while considering the claims.

Approximately 1700 claims were settled by March, 1985 and a total of approximately Rs.1.7 crores was paid to the next of kin. The scrutiny for the claims after July-August, 1985 was made more rigorous and death certificates, FIRs and a copy of the ration card were required as part of documentary evidence.

In January, 1986 the M.H.A. announced the enhancement of the compensation in death cases by another Rs.10,000/- a total of Rs.20,000/- in each case.

As on date, the Relief Commissioner's office has verified a total of 2426 cases of deaths in the Union Territory (a detailed check by this Committee has however shown that there are 21 cases of duplication). However, in some cases the compensation has not been collected. The present position in regard to payment of relief is as follows: -

1. Total number of death cases - 2426
2. Total number of persons to whom Rs.20,000/- has been paid - 2271
3. No. of cases in which Rs.20,000/- is yet to be paid - 1
4. No. of cases where the 2nd instalment of Rs.10,000/- is to be paid - 154

Total: - 2426

In addition to the monetary help, the Delhi Administration also decided to allot DDA flats at reserve prices to the widows. The flats were allotted on payment of an initial instalment of Rs.1,000/-.

A total of 942 flats were allotted to the widows against this scheme. It was also decided that any widow who got married would get Rs.5,000/- and a daughter of the widow who got married would be given Rs.3,000/- after proper verification. Three widows who married were extended this benefit and Rs.3,000/- each was given in 48 cases of daughter's marriage.

Efforts were also made to provide training to the widows to enable them to stand on their own feet. These efforts were made by the Government as well as voluntary agencies. Under the NORAD scheme, the National Association of Young Enterprises were asked to give training / employment to 200 widows. During the 9 months training each widow was given a stipend of Rs.250/- per month. However, while the training was imparted, it did not serve much purpose because afterwards proper jobs could not be found for widows.

Efforts were further made to provide jobs to eligible widows. Initially offers of jobs as anganwadi workers at a rate of Rs.250/-p.m. were made to 117 widows / dependents but only 19 widows / dependents responded to it.

In 1986 an attempt was made to find out the number of widows or their wards who would require employment. Initially 300 widows and their wards came forward to fill in the application form for employment. The Lt. Governor vide his letter U.O. No.86/LG/86/914-30 dated 7-3-86 asked various Government

Departments had agencies of Delhi Administration to identify posts for the employment of these widows. He also granted age relaxation and relaxation in qualifications in all the case vide U.O. No.313/LG/86/932 dated 29-5-86 from Raj Niwas.

A number of voluntary agencies also gave financial assistance as well as training to the widows. The Directorate of Social Welfare ran three work centers to National Association of Young Enterprises on 16-2-86. NAYE trained 57 widows till 15-9-86. The training was in knitting and stitching. The stipend was Rs.250/- per month per widow. Besides Mata Gujari and Nishkam trained 25 widows each. Church Auxiliary for Social Action (CASA) trained 50 widows at the end of the training gave each of them one knitting machine. At the moment, in Tilak Vihar, Nishkam, Saurachua and Sikh Women's Association are functioning on a Employment - cum - Training Project employing 40, 7 and 4 widows respectively.

Government agencies and departments have till date employed 292 widows. However, 371 offer letters have been issued. The details are shown below: -

1. No. of widows eligible for employment	990
2. No. of applications received	700
3. Total No. of applications sent to Deptts	433
4. Total No. of appointment letters issued	371
5. Total No. of widows joined	292

The Delhi State Civil Supplies Corporation employed some 50 widows in the Masala Grinding and Packaging. This was stopped for two months because of objection from the Agmark authorities which has been sorted out now. Some 35 widows are employed by DSCSC in sanitary and packaging in their Safdarjang Flyover Godown.

The DDA (slums) wing have also allotted some shops and stalls in Tilak Vihar to the widows, the details of which are as under: -

Category	Eligible allottee	Physical possession given
Shops allotted	57	32
Platforms allotted	49	20

The date of draw for allotment was on 13-12-86. The conditions laid down by the DDA are that the widows should give an affidavit to the effect that they have not subsequently married and have not got Government jobs.

The Relief Commissioner had written to some private companies as well as public sector undertakings to identify posts for these widows. One M/s Pure Drinks have responded by offering employment to 12 widows but they have not clarified the nature of jobs.

Relief In Cases Now Verified

The total number of persons who died in the November, 1984 riots has now been determined as 2733. In 2401 cases Relief Commissioner has already given the monetary compensation to the next of kin. However, in 154 cases next of kin have received only Rs.10,000/-.

It appears that the next of kin have not appeared to claim the additional amount of Rs.10,000/- despite repeated notices issued by the office of the Relief Commissioner. They can do so now at any time as it has been confirmed by the Relief Commissioner that cheque are ready.

In addition to these cases it has now been concluded that there are an additional 345 cases eligible to receive assistance. I, therefore, recommend that the same compensation and facilities should be extended to the next of kin in these 345 cases, which has been given to others by the Relief Commissioner.

Cases have come before this Committee wherein the widow did not come forward for the second instalment of Rs.10,000/- which was not announced later. It was pleaded before the Committee by some applicants that the widow had in the intervening period re-married and she was therefore neither interested nor entitled to receive the remaining amount. The money was now being claimed either by the parents of the deceased or by the older brother or sister. There were also a few cases in which the amount had not been claimed by the widow at all.

The Relief Commissioner's Office had rejected the claims of the parents on the ground that it was only the widow who was entitled to the relief. In the view of this Committee, the difficulties of the parents and in some cases those of other surviving members of the family have also to be alleviated because they were also dependent, at least in some measure, on the earnings of the deceased.

The Committee, therefore, recommends that the Relief Commissioner should make payments to the surviving parents where the widow has not come forward to claim either in whole or in part, the amount of ex-gratia payment upto 1st June, 1987.

Recommendations

No monetary payment can be an adequate compensation for the loss of life. What can be done is to reduce the trauma undergone by the widow and the children and to mitigate their hardships due to the loss of the bread earner.

Payment of money either in lump sum or in instalments or over life time can not also create conditions of normalcy, which can only be brought about by making the widow and the children self-supporting.

The Administration did make efforts to provide suitable training to some of the widows to enable them to stand on their own feet but such schemes did not meet with any significant success. There were difficulties because widows had small children at home or because they had to travel long distances or again because the wages were not commensurate with their needs.

The subsequent efforts made by the Administration to provide Government jobs to such widows, particularly in schools, evoked much greater response. So far Delhi Administration has been able to provide jobs to 371 such widows out of nearly 700 who have applied. Of these 292 have joined the jobs offered to them. Since then repeated demands have been received from the remaining 300 and odd widows that they should also be given similar jobs.

As the Delhi Administration is not able to find any more jobs for the remaining cases, it is necessary that the Government of India should also step in, in a big way, and immediately provide jobs for the remaining 300 widows by relaxing suitably rules on recruitment pertaining to age, educational qualifications and experience.

There are a number of widows who because of age or lack of education cannot fit in any job. The Directorate of Social Welfare did initiate a scheme to grant old age pension in such cases but the amount so sanctioned namely Rs.60/- per month was far too inadequate considering the present level of prices. In any case, the scheme was given up after a few months. As these old widows do not have any one to take care of them, in my view the responsibility lies on the State to look after them. I would, therefore, recommend that a minimum pension of Rs.500/- per widow should be given to those who are above 55 years of age, for life provided no employment has been given to them or to any of their children by the Administration.

Another category, which requires special care and attention, is that of the children of the deceased. The Administration does of course; provide free education to them in its schools. But the exemption of tuition fee alone cannot be sufficient to meet the needs of these children. They would require money for purchase of books, uniforms, transport etc. I would, therefore, recommend that a monthly stipend of Rs.50/- per child for those studying up to the Higher Secondary and Rs.100/- per child for those studying in colleges should also be allowed by the Government in r/o the children of the deceased.

Conclusion

The Committee concludes that the number of dead in the November 1984 riots is 2733. The particulars of these cases are given in parts I, II and III respectively of the enclosed list.

The Committee recommends that in addition to other benefits, suitable Government employment should be offered to the eligible widows or one member from each family in relaxation of rules pertaining to age, educational qualifications and work experience.

The Committee recommends that old age pension of Rs.500/- per widow should be granted in such cases where the widow is of more than 55 years of age and no employment has been given to the widow or one of her sons.

The Committee recommends that a stipend of Rs.50/- and Rs.100/- per child be given to the children of those killed in riots, while studying in school and college respectively.

The Committee concludes that most of the cases of death and relief have already been covered. However, there could well be a few more who have not come forward so far either through ignorance or infirmity. The door cannot be closed for them.

The Committee would, therefore, recommend that the work of the Relief Commissioner should continue. As the number of such cases is not likely to be large, no additional establishment would be necessary for this purpose.

In conclusion the Committee would like to acknowledge the help and co-operation given to it by the officers of the Delhi Police, Delhi Administration and the Government of India in conducting this enquiry by Shri F.S. Riazuddin who was appointed as the OSD to the Committee worked virtually single handed to receive and sort out the applications and to conduct the initial interviews with the applicants. Smt. Naini Jayanseelan, earlier Additional District Magistrate in the D.C. Office and later Joint Secretary (Planning) provided invaluable help in collecting the data from the Relief Commissioner's office. Shri S.P. Kapoor of the Bureau of Economics and Statistics helped the Committee with the computerization of the records and the preparation of the final list. The assistance given by him and his staff is gratefully acknowledged.

(R.K. AHOOJA)

HOME SECRETARY

Till 1st June, 1986